

The U.S. House of Representatives today passed legislation that included language authored by Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) to aid in the clean-up and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Wittman's bill, the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act, was included as part of H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management (FARRM) Act of 2013. One of Wittman's signature pieces of legislation, the Bay measure would enhance coordination, flexibility and efficiency of restoration efforts. The 2013 Farm Bill passed the House by a vote of 216-208.

"What a great achievement for Virginia and America's First District today, with passage of this provision to help restore our Bay," Wittman said. "I'm pleased the House included my bill in passage of legislation today, to bring resources together and increase the efficiency of efforts to bring the Bay back into balance. I am eager for the Senate to pass Senator Warner's companion legislation and see this bill become law."

Wittman supported final passage of the FARRM Act, which also included important reforms to agricultural programs. The Virginia farming and forestry industries support over 500,000 jobs across the Commonwealth.

Wittman, in previous remarks supporting his bill, said, "Farmers have a vested interest in a clean Chesapeake Bay; their commitment to the land and waters is reflected by multi-generation stewardship of farms across the watershed...Better accounting and more flexible management are essential to restoring the Chesapeake Bay. Crosscut budgeting and adaptive management provide performance-based measures to assure federal dollars currently spent on Bay restoration activities produce results. Both techniques will ensure that we're coordinating how restoration dollars are spent and making sure that everyone understands how individual projects fit into the bigger picture. That way, we're not duplicating efforts, spending money we don't need to or, worse, working at cross purposes."

As a leader on Bay issues in Congress and Co-Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Caucus, Wittman continues to advocate for improvements in the management of resources for restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. To achieve the goals of enhanced coordination, flexibility and efficiency, Wittman's legislation would fully implement two cutting edge management techniques, crosscut budgeting and adaptive management. These techniques have been used successfully in the Everglades and the Great Lakes; however, they have not been fully implemented in Bay restoration efforts, where results have lagged far behind the billions of dollars spent. Additionally, the legislation would create a Chesapeake Bay Program

Independent Evaluator to review and report to Congress on restoration activities in the watershed. The Chesapeake Bay partnership includes 10 federal agencies, six states and the District of Columbia, over one thousand localities and multiple non-governmental organizations. To date, the complexity of the participants has resulted in a muddled effort. In drafting this legislation, Congressman Wittman drew heavily on his 23 years of experience as a shellfish specialist monitoring water quality and environmental health issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Virginia Senator Mark Warner [recently introduced companion legislation](#) in the Senate.

*Congressman Rob Wittman, the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Chesapeake Bay Watershed Caucus, represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee, where he is a member of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Resources.*

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